Dear Committee Members,

This letter is in response to House Bill #658, an amendment to the Large Carnivore Act, and more specifically, the addition of criteria to breed large carnivores in the state of Michigan. As owner(s) of Premier Animal Attractions, LLC. of Ortonville, MI. and Roscommon Zoo of Roscommmon, MI., we strongly oppose the current draft of this bill for several reasons. This bill could have an immediate and long lasting effect on our businesse(s) and should not be passed until the interests and rights of **all** zoos here in MI are considered. Here are the reasons why we are in opposition:

1) The proposed language for criteria for breeding of large carnivores is very excessive and unnecessary and some of it unattainable unless you operate a multi-million dollar facility. This will eliminate breeding in very well run but smaller facilities similar to ours.
2) The breeding of any animal is not so specific that positive results, outcome and procedures can't be met regardless of the proposed criteria.
3) All facilities possessing large carnivores in MI, including large accredited facilities are USDA CLASS C exhibitors and open to the public zoos (no private collections). The breeding criteria should be written in such a manner to include all USDA licensed facilities with large carnivores and not just a select few with alternative agendas. For example, pushing AZA and/or ZAA criteria and agendas.
4) There does not need to be additional security measures in place for a whelping mother. Safety protocols for large carnivores are already in place and we fail to see how breeding would affect such protocols.

For these reasons, among others, we will oppose this amendment until the language benefits all of the USDA licensed large carnivore facilities (zoos) in Michigan and not just a select few with their own agendas.

Sincerely,

Andrew and Rachelle Gehringer

Roscommon Zoo